GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4094
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2014
STRENGTHENING OF VMCS
Ajmal Maulana Badruddin

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware of the representation from the representatives of the people from North-Eastern States which demanded strengthening of the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees (VMCs) so as to conduct social audit on the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and other rural development programmes in the districts;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether VMCs without any statutory powers vested in them are toothless bodies to take any action against corrupt officials; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to strengthen the VMCs with necessary powers so that the local MPs who Chair the VMCs could play an effective role in the implementation, monitoring and vigilance of the flagship rural development programmes?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA)

(a) No, Madam. The social audit of MGNREGA is to be conducted by the Gram Sabha under the Act and not by the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) & (d) The Ministry of Rural Development has reviewed, from time to time, the functioning of the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees (VMCs) constituted at State and district levels to monitor/review the implementation of rural development schemes. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development also reviewed the functioning of the VMCs in 2013. The Ministry of Rural Development has submitted the Action Taken Report on the recommendations made by the Standing Committee. The steps taken by the Government to strengthen the VMC include the following:
(i) Head of the Autonomous District Council in districts having Schedule VI Areas to be made member of the district level VMCs.
(ii) The Convener Bank of State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) would be a special invitee to the State Level VMC meetings;
(iii) Programmes of Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Rajiv Gandhi GrameenVidyutikaranYojana(RGGVY) of Ministry of Power have been included for review by district level VMCs ;
(iv) Time lines have been prescribed for issue of meeting notices, agenda notes and proceedings of the meetings and for follow up action on recommendations of the VMCS so that the VMCs could monitor the programmes effectively;
(v) Modification made in the website of the Ministry of Rural Development so as to upload the meeting notices, agenda, minutes and action taken reports of each meeting.